

Frequently Asked Questions About the Golf Land Swap

1. What exactly is this “Land Swap” Proposal?

The idea is this: The City would allow 130 new homes to be built on 12 acres of the Golf Complex where the Mif course currently sits. In return, the City would get 12 acres of land on North Loop Road in the Harbor Bay Business Park to build sports fields and \$7.2 million to fix the Golf Complex, build the new sports fields, and make other critical infrastructure improvements. Meanwhile, the Golf Complex operator, Kemper Sports, would provide an additional \$3.5 million for much-needed improvements to the Golf Complex.

2. Why should the City ever consider such a proposal?

There are only two reasons for the City to consider this proposal:

- 1) Generate private money to fix the Chuck Corica Golf Complex. The Complex is in financial and physical trouble. Rounds of play are down, revenues are down, and deferred maintenance needs are projected to further reduce rounds and revenue. At a certain point, if these trends continue, the City may need to raise fees, increase taxes, or shut down portions of the Complex. The National Golf Foundation prepared a detailed analysis of the Complex. To view the NGF report, [click here](#).
- 2) Increase the number of playing fields in Alameda. Recent surveys of the Alameda community indicate that we need 4 more full-size multiuse fields. Opportunities for land and money to add sports fields in Alameda are extremely limited.

3. What about the traffic?

The traffic generated by 130 new housing units on Island Drive is a serious concern that must be addressed. Clearly traffic is already a problem on Island Drive, particularly in the morning. The new homes would add more cars to the many cars that are already using Island Drive every morning. The question for the City and the community is this: Is there a way to improve traffic flow on Island Drive so that the increase in cars would not noticeably change driving conditions? If not, then this proposal is probably unacceptable to the community.

At this time, the City does not know whether improvements can be made to accommodate the new traffic without causing a perceived decrease in service (i.e. more congestion).

If the City Council chooses to direct staff to study the proposal, the issue of traffic would be the single most important question to get answered.

4. What is being considered by the City Council on December 13th?

The City Council is considering a staff recommendation to **study** the proposal. The Council **cannot** approve the proposal on December 13th. In fact, the Council **cannot** approve the proposal until a full Environmental Impact Report is completed. Staff is recommending a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that outlines the terms of the evaluation process and the terms **for an exchange of properties** if the Council and community ultimately decide that the proposal is in the best interests of the City.

5. Why is the staff recommending an MOA?

Approval of the MOA by the City Council and Harbor Bay Island Associates (HBIA) establishes a process by which both parties (the City and HBIA) will work together to further evaluate the proposal and establishes a source of funds for the City of Alameda to complete a full evaluation of the proposal.

If the community and Council don't believe that this proposal is even worth considering, the Council can stop this work by denying the MOA before any more time is spent on this idea. Approval of the MOA by the City Council and HBIA **does not** represent an approval of the proposal, nor does approval of the MOA commit the City Council to approve the proposal at a future date.

6. What does the MOA actually say?

The draft MOA can be viewed by clicking [here](#). In summary, the draft MOA includes the following major terms:

- Term: HBIA and the City will work together to further evaluate the proposal until a final decision is made by the City Council.
- Costs: HBIA will cover all costs, including City staff time and City consultant time, including legal services, to evaluate the proposal and prepare all necessary documents and reports, including the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), exchange agreements, and all legal and financial documents for City Council consideration.
- Products: The objective of the work to be completed under the MOA is a package of documents for community and City Council consideration. The package would include:
 1. An EIR evaluating all environmental aspects of the proposal. (To inform the planning effort and the MOA discussions, work on the EIR has already begun with funds provided by HBIA.)
 2. A draft resolution, a draft ordinance, and a Planning Board recommendation on the proposed re-designation and rezoning of the Mif property from Open Space to Residential.

3. A draft resolution and a Planning Board recommendation on a tentative map for up to 130 single family homes on the Mif property. (See Exhibit 2 for a conceptual layout of 130 lots on the Mif property.)
 4. A draft amendment to the 1989 Harbor Bay Development Agreement (DA) to include the new 130-unit "village".
 5. A recommendation from the Golf Commission on the proposed re-configuration of the Jack Clark Course to accommodate the relocated Mif 9-hole Course. (See Exhibit 3 for a conceptual draft layout of the reconfigured course.)
 6. A draft resolution, a draft ordinance, and a Planning Board recommendation on the proposed re-designation and rezoning of North Loop Road from Commercial Manufacturing to Open Space in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
 7. A recommendation from the Recreation and Park Commission on the proposed recreational facilities on the North Loop Road property. (See Exhibit 4 for a conceptual layout for new playing fields at North Loop Road.)
 8. A draft Property Exchange Agreement (PEA) for the "swap" of the two properties. HBIA would give the City 12.2 acres of land that it owns on North Loop Road, and the City would give HBIA 12.2 acres owned by the City and currently occupied by the Mif Albright 9-hole course.
- City discretion to say "no thank you": Per the MOA, the City Council retains the ability and right to deny or amend the packages without incurring any financial penalties or repaying any of the costs incurred by HBIA in producing the package of documents.

7. Would the City lose the 9-hole short course?

No, the proposal is to relocate the existing 9-hole short course to an area on the south east side of the South Course and retain 45 holes.

8. What is the process for approving or denying homes at the Golf Course?

Before any actions can be taken by the City to build homes on the Mif property, the following steps must be taken:

1. The City must complete a full Environmental Impact Report of the proposal. The EIR process includes at least two public hearings in front of the Planning Board and one in front of the City Council on the adequacy of the analysis.

2. The Planning Board must hold at least one public hearing on the proposal to change the General Plan and Zoning Designations and subdivide the property into 130 lots.
3. The City Council needs to hold one public hearing on the change to the General Plan, rezoning, and the subdivision application and a second public hearing on the rezoning request.
4. The City Council needs to hold a public hearing on the proposed property exchange the "swap".
5. The Planning Board needs to hold a public hearing on the design of the homes.

None of these required public hearings have yet occurred.

9. What do these proposed homes look like?

The new homes would be built on 12.2 acres on the east side of Island Drive between Clubhouse Memorial Drive and Maitland Drive. A preliminary site plan is available ([click here](#)) showing how 130 lots could be accommodated on the site. The diagram shows 130 lots of approximately 2,500 square feet each. The homes would all have two-car garages and would be either two or three stories in height. No designs have been created yet. This plan is conceptual and not final. Changes can be made to improve the design if deemed necessary or appropriate. Neither the Planning Board nor the City Council has reviewed the attached plan yet.

10. What is the process for approving or denying a new sports field?

1. Acquire or lease the land from the property owner.
2. Identify funds to design and build the new fields.
3. Hold a public hearing and get recommendations and actions on the proposed design from the Recreation and Parks commission and the planning board.
4. Hold a city council public hearing on actions to approve design and build fields.

11. What would the new sports fields look like?

The new sports complex would be built on 12.2 acres on the north side of North Loop Road in the Harbor Bay Business Park. A preliminary site plan ([click here](#)) shows how two soccer fields and two baseball fields could be accommodated on the site. This plan has not been reviewed yet by the Planning Board, Recreation and Parks Commission, or the City Council.

12. Why is Harbor Bay Island Associates (HBIA) involved in all of this?

Under the City of Alameda Charter Section 22-12, the City cannot sell off park land (or a portion of the Golf Complex) unless, either:

1. The proposal is put to a vote of the citizens of Alameda, or
2. The City exchanges the parkland for an equivalent amount of parkland in the same service area.

HBIA has offered to trade its 12 acres of land on North Loop for the 12 acres of land at the Golf Complex. As described in the MOA, HBIA has also offered to give the City \$7.2 million if the City does the swap and allows for the 130 new homes.

13. Why not just skip the “swap” and put the question to the voters?

The City Council could do this, but it would be expensive. First, the City would need to pay for the entitlement process and the EIR (\$1 to \$2 million). Then the City would need to pay for the election. The City could not advocate or spend any money to advocate for the passage of the measure. If the measure fails, then the citizens of Alameda would have wasted \$1 to \$2 million that could have been spent on something else.

The MOA/swap approach allows the City to avoid spending its own money and decide whether it is a good idea after all the studies, the EIRs and public hearings are completed at no expense to the citizens.

14. How does this proposal generate money for the Golf Complex or new sports fields?

If the City Council approves the package of documents described in the MOA, then HBIA would provide the City with \$7.2 million and the 12.2 acres of land on North Loop Road in exchange for the rezoned Mif property and the development rights afforded to HBIA under the amended development agreement.

The \$7.2 million would be made available to the City within a specified time after approval of the Property Exchange Agreement for the City to use for, among other things, reconfiguration and improvement of the Golf Complex, relocation of the 9-hole course, and building the sports complex on North Loop Road. If the City Council approves the package but for some reason HBIA were unable to provide the funds, the City would retain a \$200,000 deposit toward the payment provided by HBIA upon approval of the MOA.